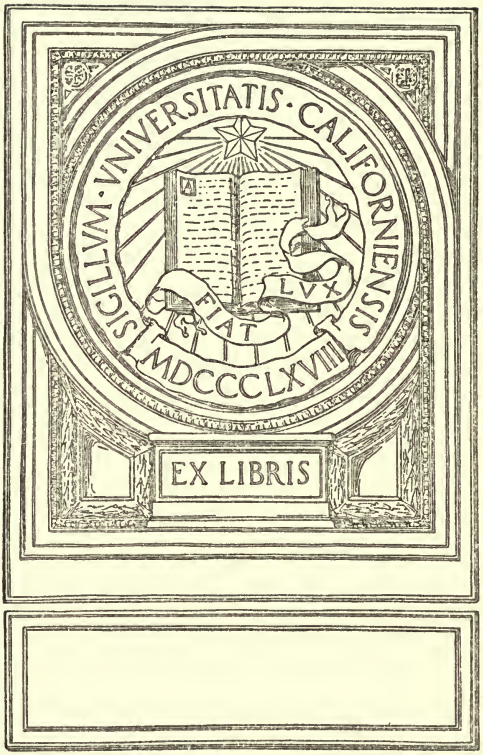
UC-NRLF
$B 272 967

YB 11779


SIGILLVM · VNIVERSITATIS · CALIFORNIENSIS
LVX
FIAT
MDCCCLXVIII
EX LIBRIS

This copy for
Cousin Ella Slade and Carrie
with the affectionate good
wishes of
Eunice Felton Taylor
January 10, 1921.

CHANTS WITH THE SOUL

CHANTS WITH THE SOUL

BY

EDWARD ROBESON TAYLOR

SAN FRANCISCO
PRIVATELY PRINTED
1920

COPYRIGHT, 1920, BY EDWARD ROBESON TAYLOR

985
T39
v

THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED WITH DEEP AFFECTION
TO MY SONS, EDWARD DEWITT TAYLOR &
HENRY HUNTLY TAYLOR

PS3539
T29C3
1920
MAIN

M191924

***Wilson, Lafayette, The Aviator, *and* The Chant of Victory, *have been published in the San Francisco Bulletin;* On the Wings of War, *published in the San Francisco Chronicle; and* Edward Rowland Sill, *published in the Pacific Unitarian.*

CONTENTS

THE SATHER TOWER Page 1

THE SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDING 6

IN THE KEITH ROOM 9

WITH THE POET:

- THE MIGHT OF POESY 15
- IN THE "REALMS OF GOLD" 16
- IN THE SILENT NIGHT 17
- PARNASSUS 18
- SCORN NOT THE WEED 19
- THE AGNOSTICS 20
- THE GARDEN OF HOPE 21
- THE OLD SCULPTOR 22
- VARIETY 23
- ON THE BEACH AT SAN FRANCISCO 24
- IN THE LIBRARY OF THE BOHEMIAN CLUB, SAN FRANCISCO 25
- THE SONNET'S FREEDOM 26
- TO THE SONNET 27
- MY DESPAIR 28
- THE SONNET TRAIL 29
- THE MUSE FINDING THE HEAD OF ORPHEUS: A STATUE BY EDWARD BERGE 30
- WATTS-DUNTON AND THE SONNET 31
- POETRY 32

WITH NATURE:

- THE LEAST AS THE GREATEST 34

WITH NATURE (continued): Page

SUNSHINE 35

A CALIFORNIA GARDEN 36

TO THE TREE 37

THE MOUNTAIN PEAK 38

THE VALLEY 39

TWIN PEAKS, SAN FRANCISCO 40

THE FLOWER 41

WONDER 42

CLEARING UP AFTER A SHOWER 43

A SUMMER AFTERNOON 44

CREATION 45

THE CALIFORNIA POPPY 46

WITH SOME OF THE GREAT:

TO JULIUS CÆSAR 48

BYRON 49

TO EDWIN MARKHAM 50

EDWARD ROWLAND SILL 51

ON CALIFORNIA'S LEGISLATIVE DECLARATION MAKING INA COOLBRITH POET LAUREATE 52

JOHN MUIR 53

ON READING THE LIFE OF FRANCIS THOMPSON BY EVERARD MEYNELL 54

ON READING GEORGE STERLING'S BOOK OF SONNETS PUBLISHED BY THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA 55

TO LLOYD MIFFLIN 56

AT POLLOCK'S GRAVE 57

WITH SOME OF THE GREAT (continued): Page

BENJAMIN IDE WHEELER 58

TO HENRY MORSE STEPHENS 59

HENRY MORSE STEPHENS 60

FORREST 61

WILLIAM HENRY BEATTY 62

JEREMIAH LYNCH 63

JESSE WARREN LILIENTHAL 64

MARY WEAVER KINCAID 65

TO ROBERT W. SERVICE 66

WILSON 67

LAFAYETTE 69

IN VARIOUS KEYS:

BOHEMIA 72

A CHANT OF VICTORY 73

ON THE WINGS OF WAR 74

THE FLAG 75

THE YOUNG AVIATOR 76

ANGELS 77

SAN FRANCISCO 1912 78

LOOKING DOWN ON SAN FRANCISCO AT NIGHT 79

THE COLUMNS OF THE SUN AT BAALBEC 80

THE ORGAN 81

CHURCH-BELLS 82

A STREET IN OLD MONTEREY 83

A CAGED EAGLE 84

IN VARIOUS KEYS (continued): Page

AN OLD MINER AT SHASTA WITH THE HAUNTS OF OLD 85

EGYPT 86

TO THE MUMMY OF PRINCESS ISIS 87

THE OLD SWEETHEART 88

THE OLD DOCTOR 89

CARCASSONNE 90

THANKSGIVING, 1918 92

ON NEW YEAR'S EVE 93

LIFE'S JEWELS 94

RICHES 94

DE MORTUIS:

DEATH 96

THE GRAVE 97

WHY FEAR? 98

CONSOLATION 99

LOVE 100

BEHOLD THE SEASONS 101

BEHOLD THE SKIES 102

PROOF OF GOD 103

THE SPIRIT'S REALM 104

RELIGION 105

COMPLETENESS 106

BELIEF 107

LIFE AND DEATH 108

MONSTER OR GOD 109

CHANTS WITH THE SOUL

THE SATHER TOWER

I

ABOVE the noise and tumult of the day
Thou risest to the silences of heaven,
A glorious thing from even unto even,
A beauty's vision fading not away.
It must have been a more than blessèd dream,
When all the feelings rose conjointly wise
Against the glamour of some worldly scheme,
That moved her heart to raise thee to the skies,
Where thou in all thy veins of steel and stone
With Aspiration's purest blood shall thrill,
As evermore around thee shall be sown
The seeds of Learning and of Righteous Will,
And back of thee the radiant, everlasting hill.

2

Gigantic flower thou, whose beauty beams
With unimagined loveliness of Art,
Of all the campus blossoming the heart
And sublimated essence of its dreams;
Giving the fragrance of unwonted blooms
In many a far-away, delightsome dell,
Or where the cypress builds her heavy glooms,
Or e'en where mild-eyed fairies love to dwell;
Where books disclose their magic-working lore,
And cast their cunning lures for stumbling feet,
While sweets as strange as life their joyance pour,

Till all the moments in one round complete
Within the arms of concord pleasurably meet.

3

The fateful hours of the passing day
From thee shall ever musically peal,
And through the somnolence of night shall steal,
Till lost in whispering echoes far away.
Perpetual guardian thou, whose tongue shall tell
The lesson learnt in Indolence's bowers,
When idle thoughts the idle bosom swell,
And Time unreaped its wretched prey devours.
Yet shall thy bells of ever-present cheer
Hearten the struggle of laborious souls,
And Trade herself will turn a listening ear,
As she pursues her daily myriad goals,
When mid her roar thy golden voice the minute tolls.

4

With hoary-headed Time a friend thou'lt be,
And play with years as with fresh-hearted things
As thy emblazoned crest forever springs
Into the wondering air divinely free.
Here shall ambitious youth its vans wide spread
For flights beyond the rosiest dreams of hope;
Or if perchance on indolences fed
With adverse circumstance it fails to cope,
The sight of thee upsoaring lone and high,
With Aspiration as thy soul and seal,

And Admonition blazing in thine eye,
Will rouse it like a battle's trumpet peal
To every glorious thrill Achievement dares to feel.

5

So firmly dost thou grip the rocky ground,
Thy beauteous form the earthquake might assail,
And storms upon thee all their fury hail,
Yet scatheless at the last thou wouldst be found.
Still thou dost seem the airiest of things,
With lofty crest which glitters in the air,
That blooms by day a flower with radiant wings,
At night a beacon shining starlike there.
So ever may the men and women here
Foundationed be in nobleness of soul,
Unshaken by the raging storms of fear,
A shining light for every worthy goal,
Undaunted by life's waves however mad they roll.

6

Thy roots strike deeper than the claws of steel,
And bolts and bonds that hold thee in thy place,
For those are deep as universal space,
And wide as every longing we can feel:
They reach the great ideals that ever blaze
Around the empurpled summits of desire,
Until as conquering Gods we bless our days
With nurturing breath of their eternal fire;
They stimulate the weary and the weak

To march still onward though the road be hard,
And Difficulty's crown rejoice to seek
Though every passageway be doubly barred,
And watchful dragons stand relentless on their guard.

7

Symbol of Truth, thou ever-precious one;
Thy wingèd word speaks from thy columned stone
With voice as clear as that of some dim, lone,
Ice-crownèd peak far reaching to the sun.
It wakes our bosom's golden-hearted lyre,
Until in music of seraphic strain
It lifts our thoughts from every low desire
Up to the wisdom of celestial gain;
And may thy bells ring out in clarion sound
Truth's sacred gospel to the willing breeze,
Till all this place in rightness be renowned,
And till adventuring youth in season sees
What is Life's vital wine, and what its worthless lees.

8

Beauty breathed gratefulness when thou wast planned:
She saw herself in brilliancy anew,
Until from steel and stone there nobly grew
A marvellous thing transfiguring the land.
She saw her child as with immortal breath
Swell to the roots with heaven-approving pride,
As he who drew thy lines beyond all death
In triumph stood serenely by thy side.

The Muse had roamed the chambers of his soul,
Where domes and towers of song were glad to be,
And there he saw thee as his perfect goal,
In all the splendors of thy high degree,
Thy inexpressible, divine simplicity.

9

Thou ceaseless monitor of worthy deeds,
We greet thee here as some familiar friend,
Who blessing gives us that can have no end,
And all ennoblement forever breeds.
Imagination sees upon thy sides
The golden names of those that never die;
With those rare ones that hid their latent prides,
Yet did their work that others raised on high;
With these thy stones in living glory blaze,
Thy column seems to pierce the vaulted skies,
And as we longer and the longer gaze,
A reverential incense seems to rise
And wreathe itself in hallowed words of holy praise.

THE SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY BUILDING

I

WHILE the mad clamors of world-shaking war
Have stunned the sickened ear and rived the heart,
While men in millions have in valor kissed
The awful lips of sanguinary death,
While blood and tears in horror's streams have flowed
As if all agonies were in their depths,
While great cathedrals, hallowed and sublime,
Beloved of all the ages, have been slain,
While devastation's unrelenting hand
Has crushed the hearted homes of joy and thrift,
Till even pity can no longer weep,
Peace has erected this majestic pile,
And placed on it her everlasting crown.
While war's dread uproars shook the frighted earth,
The binding rivets pierced its sides of steel,
And all its stones were then in order laid,
Till consummation rose triumphant here.
And she the City of our heart of heart
Adds one more jewel to her dauntless breast,
A jewel all immaculate and pure.

2

O thou, great architecture's favored child,
The product of our Kelham's mind and heart,
And of those artisans whose wondrous skill

In order followed what he had designed,
I kneel before thee with my heart so full,
That though my praises ran without an end,
And though the Muses fed my great desire,
I would remain thy hopeless debtor still,
I yet would stand before thee wonder-rapt.
Thou art indeed made perfect to contain
The written thoughts of all the sons of men,
To fructify the human soul as they
Have ever done since speech has blest the world.
Here safely housed these tongues of all the past
Will speak their wisdom to the young and old,
And never weary in their gracious task.
Surrounded by the greatest and the best
What intellectual soul would ask for more;
Or should you wish to ramble o'er the page
With visions charming you at every turn,
Here are the books that willingly will lead
Your steps through all the ways you wish to go.
Science is here with all her certitudes,
And sweet Religion with her restful peace,
While Art with welcoming cheer and radiant smile
Trails her great glory o'er full many a page;
Here Poesy outspreads her dewy wings
To dare the deep recesses of the heart;
Philosophy is here in sober gray,
With all her weighty problems still unsolved,
And History comes with her imperial stride
Bearing the life-drawn word of centuries past;

Biography unrolls her marvellous tales
Of those illustrious men who conquered fate,
While Fiction far extends her rapturing scroll
To tell us of experience not our own.
Allurement here is graciousness itself,
And fills the moments with a new delight,
For should the book be leaden in your hands,
Your eye may wander to the art-crowned scene
That glows with beauty wheresoe'er you look,
And as you drink the luxury of the hour
The joy of thankfulness will brim your heart.

3

My own dear City, I bow down in thanks,
Which rise above the level of my verse,
That out of thy supreme munificence
Has come to us this latest, precious gift.
It tells us that thou art in soul so great
Thou still canst mount the far-uptowering peaks,
And robed in glory rule sublimely there;
That as in thy tremendous, trying past,
When fire and temblor spent themselves in vain,
So in thy future spreading vast and grand,
Thou shalt look nobly down on every fate,
And hold thy nestling children in thine arms
Securely safe beneath thy boundless love.

IN THE KEITH ROOM

I

UPON these walls his glorious children breathe,
And once again I sense his presence near,
As in the past, when we sat heart to heart
And felt the stir of loving comradeship.
'Twas then I knew the bloom of all the years
Would rest forever on his endless toil,
And that the dullards of an unborn age
Would have their eyes made bright, their hearts refreshed,
For that his spirit once made glad the earth.
And as we sit and almost feel the touch,
As 'twere unloosening all the bonds of death,
We joy to see his lovers thronging in,
And as they stand in rapturous praise before
His pictures which illuminate these walls,
We hail an immortality that breaks
In waves of splendor on his honored head,
And in each moment of the day exult
That where his canvases ennoble life,
The incense rises of unmeasured praise.

2

No mood of nature but his art has touched,
And given to man with his transfiguring sense:
The Dawn for him in silent mystery shod
Has climbed the peaks till, lost we know not where,

The sunlit morning bathed the glowing scene;
In truth he noted Day in all its hours,
Whether its feet were weighted as with lead,
Or borne along on Mercury's airy wings;
Whether its clouds were filled with Storm's mad
rage,
Or in their breast were nestled gentle dreams;
Whether the earth was wrapped in mist and rain,
Or the great vault of heaven's far-reaching sky
Bared her cerulean bosom to the Day,
And every voice proclaimed serene repose.
And when the Twilight binds the tired hours
With her soft, silken cords of solemn hush,
How he has made us feel that magic time,
Until all nature's everlasting heart
Seemed breathing closely to our very own.
What voices have we heard in revery then
As his imaginings filled all the air.
So when the noisy Day has come to die,
What royal couches has he spread for it,
Whereon it might in more than sumptuous state
Breathe out upon the land its latest breath.
What mysteries steal through his unfathomed
woods,
What solemn awe comes from their inward depths,
As though some special wonder kinged it there.
The Meadow's lovely voice was his to know
And bring it closer to the vulgar ear
Until the pastoral was a heavenly joy,

And humble things of knowledges the best.
How oft with him we trailed the cropping sheep
Obedient to the shepherd on their way
Unto the restful sheepfold and the night,
As down the western heavens far-flamed the sun
In all the splendor of his day's farewell.

3

Labor to him was ever sweet as is
The choicest loaf unto a starving man,
And on it he perpetually fed.
But he was human to his finger-tips,
And loved his fellow to the deepest depths.
He met him with his heart's unbounded cheer,
And often talked with him of idle things.
All nature's children were to him divine,
And every bird and flower could proudly say,
Not one of us has fallen by his hand.
In truth he was of virtue all compact,
A man as worthy to be deeply loved
As any man who ever drew a breath.
The fairies at his birth in full foretold
That natural beauty would command his heart,
And so his life was prodigally spent
In loving service at his Muse's shrine,
Where nought escaped his sympathetic eye
Or prayed his recognition all in vain.
He knew the oak as mother knows her child,
And when it on its breathing canvas shone

In all its regal, orbed magnificence
It told us something never told before.
His Art is ever intimate and close,
As is the open heart of some dear friend,
And draws us to it as a magnet draws,
The while it speaks of those infinitudes
Which bring us close to everlasting things.

4

What is this vast, stupendous universe,
With all its timely, great eternities,
Its countless worlds that hang so far in space,
But the expression of the mind divine?
And some of that small part in which we breathe
Keith sought in terms of color to make plain
To us who else might rest in ignorance.
Base imitation had his ardent scorn;
He knew its devotees were false to all
That nestled closely at the feet of Art,
And did but grope among the husks of things,
While all around the kernels lay profuse.
To this great work his life was all devote:
No holidays held off his hand, no play,
But noble, conscientious work filled up
The chaliced measure of his golden hours.
Life was to him a sacred, solemn thing
And not a bauble for the world of sport,
Or for the idle frivol of the time.
He did not deem his work more full or great

Than that of other thinking, toiling men,
But that which had been given him to do
Was what his mind and hand could do the best.
Sincerity was of his spacious soul
The very jewel without speck or flaw,
And modesty to him was as a robe.
He was a poet, but, like other men
Who in the field of genius grandly sweep,
The practical had chambers in his breast,
Wherein were bravely wrought material things.
Each phase of life he touched with equal ease,
And from them all he garnered equal wealth.
Religion kept her consecrated fires
Upon the sacred altar of his soul,
And there in vestal purity they blazed.
He voyaged not upon the sea of creeds
In search of harbors for his spirit's rest,
But all the vasty universe was his,
Whereon omnipotent, eternal power
Blazed on the bosom of each lustrous star,
Not blindly fashioned by unreasoning force
But by an order of his soul divine.
So this plain, simple man pursued his course,
A loving toiler in the ways of men,
Thinking great thoughts, and doing mighty things
Which shall adorn the breast of Beauty's own
Till Time and Beauty shall, if ever, part.
Hail and farewell, thou duty-governed man!
Hail and farewell, thou good as well as great!

THE MIGHT OF POESY

O YE whose world is bounded by the light
That pours its daily wonder in your eyes,
And see no more of life than that which lies
In hourly struggle and in graveyard night,
Know nought of Poesy's mysterious might,
That bids the creatures of the heart to rise,
And panoramas all the land and skies
With dream-born children infinitely bright.

Imagination in its utmost reach
Of lightning-pinioned, mountain-soaring speech
She gives ungrateful man in affluent store;
She shows him Nature with transfiguring voice,
Which interfused with Music's magic lore
Makes him with all divinest things rejoice.

IN THE "REALMS OF GOLD"

I ROAMED a dreamer in the "Realms of Gold,"
Where Poets' graves innumerable stood,
And where within a neighboring cypress wood
Their lines in fadeless letters were enscrolled.
To men they had their costliest treasures told
Who mammon-souled passed by in heedless mood,
Nor even bent to list the Muse's brood
When their most rapturing chords in passion rolled.

And as I wandered filled with dreams of these
That clustered round my templed memories,
While blooms of beauty starred the golden ground,
A ghostly band imparadised the air,
Who with celestial glory then were crowned,
And sang in chorus most divinely there.

IN THE SILENT NIGHT

How hushed the silence of the silent Night,
When kingly Day has lowered his haughty crest,
And cares and troubles in unruffled rest
Amid the stillness lose their harrowing might.
Then tricksy fairies, dreamy with delight,
Flit through the brain with unabated zest,
To open visions at the soul's behest,
All tremulous with hope that fears no blight.

'Tis then that quiet feeds the poet's heart,
And on the wings of his supernal art
He mounts to heights alone his brethren know—
The heights where asphodelian flowers bloom,
Where joy springs buoyant from the groans of woe,
And tears are jewels on the breast of gloom.

PARNASSUS rises from the "Realms of Gold"
In various ways of soul-created song;
Some to the slopes and lofty peaks belong,
While the great few to skyward reaches hold.
All cannot breathe the ethereal airs that fold
The summits where imaginations throng,
But they may foot the valleys as their strong
Yet tender stories are serenely told.

The wise seek not the glory-crownèd seat,
Nor long to hear their wings in triumph beat,
Nor feast on praises of adoring friends;
But e'en the lowliest one can serve the Muse,
And they who greatly seek the humblest ends
Are those dear ones she lovingly bedews.

SCORN NOT THE WEED

MY brother, do not cast thy scornful eyes
Upon the humblest weed that struggling blows,
For at its inmost heart such glory glows,
Hadst thou the mind to see, as lights the skies.
The great chrysanthemum, that nobly vies
In regal beauty with the proudest rose,
In all its gorgeousness of mien still shows
Its humble origin in every guise.

What soul may tell in this vast scheme of things
What depths divine to the immortal clings,
Or see the source of every true desire?
It is sufficient if we choose to know
That all is born of some celestial fire,
Which ofttimes makes an angel of the low.

THE AGNOSTICS

ON READING THE "MEMORIES" OF EDWARD CLODD

IN worship of the Sciences that rear
Their austere summits in ethereal air,
In calm superiority they fare
Along the "Don't-know" road they domineer.
'Tis Reason's voice alone that claims their ear,
And this gives certitude to their despair,
While Intuition, deeply hearted where
Life speeds divinely on, they scorn to hear.

Oh, can it be that of this grandeur's space
We can grasp nought but that its wondrous race
Is but the product of some errant force;
That all this miracle proclaims no God,
No soul-inspiring, spiritual Source,
And that great man himself is but a clod?

THE GARDEN OF HOPE

HOPE'S garden springs in every human breast,
Where fadeless blossoms grow beneath his care,
While melodies delight the fragrant air
That folds us in an atmosphere of rest.
The gorgeous castles roseate clouds invest,
And argosies no storm can harm are there,
With maidens incommunicably fair,
Whom Revery leads to dreamlands of the blest.

At times the North Wind breathes upon the blooms,
Until Despair makes mock amid his glooms,
With Faith a mourner helpless in her tears;
But Hope, divinely radiant of mien,
Scatters full soon the host of coward fears,
And rules once more triumphant and serene.

THE OLD SCULPTOR

THE plow of age has furrowed all his face,
And by the weight of years his form is bent;
The fires that once were in his bosom pent
Burn feebly now where fled is every grace.
In this old, shuffling man we find no trace
Of earth's ambitions save to be content
To dwell apart and give his nature vent
In carving things that Art would fain embrace.

Does Beauty come from Beauty's self alone?
Ah, no; the pine makes proud the mountain stone,
The rose blooms greatly on the ordured heap;
The ugliest shape the noblest soul may bear,
And as this thought into the mind sinks deep
The agèd sculptor seems transfigured there.

VARIETY

VARIETY is Nature's pregnant sign
That in creation does itself disclose;
Minutest change from great to small she shows
In every shrub and flower and clustering vine;
For closely scan this heaven-aspiring pine,
Its needles vary as it upward grows,
And note with care this beauty-crested rose,
Whose every petal takes a new design.

So Life is neither wholly good nor bad,
But, with celestial armor ever clad,
It sweeps the universe with conquering wings.
Men vary as the leaves upon the tree,
But 'tis for them to heed the voice that sings
Eterne on Virtue's lips in every key.

ON THE BEACH AT SAN FRANCISCO

THOU myriad-hearted Ocean, on whose breast
That stretches boundlessly its waste of gray,
Mine eye is fain in indolence to play,
As all my thoughts to quiet are caressed.
I watch thy surge build high its curving crest,
To break in lacelike, delicate array,
Where children plash inordinately gay,
While age-dimmed eyes with newer light are blest.

Thou one of every mood, I see thee now
With God's beneficence upon thy brow,
With all that's awful in thy raging might;
Yet though men's bones in millions pave thy floor,
And treasures vast thou seal'st in caves of night,
Angels of good still tend thee evermore.

IN THE LIBRARY OF THE BOHEMIAN CLUB, SAN FRANCISCO

WITH finger on her lip, Silence sits here
In languorous robes of gossamer bedight,
As veiled in softness of the sifted light
She seems so deeply, infinitely dear.
Poet, Philosopher, Historian, Seer,
These, from their book-built thrones which thrill
the sight,
Appeal with eloquence of loving might
To feed our souls on their exhaustless cheer.

Ye glorious Gods of men, grant that we may
Your subjects be when strident grows the day,
Or leaden spirits lag through wearied brains;
Then shall we roam o'er fields of thought sublime,
And far beyond the realm where Mammon reigns
Defy the hateful tyranny of Time.

THE SONNET'S FREEDOM

WHY laboring spin your cobweb sonnets, you
That might some lofty tower of song design;
Why in a cage great Poesy confine
When all the boundless ether lies in view?
Ah, critic friend, within the narrowest mew
Pearls have been born so preciously divine
They bear the Muse's most incorporate sign,
And deathless live as beautiful as true.

The souls that have the Sonnet sanctified
Felt it no prison, but with bars as wide
As has the ocean or the starlit air;
The small in size may have the largest heart,
And in the sight of all the Muses bear
Upon its breast the conquering badge of Art.

TO THE SONNET

THESE many, many years I've toiled o'er thee,
Pursued thine octave's hard and thorny way,
And sought thy sestette's mandates to obey,
That mine one perfect flower of song might be—
A bloom so moulded by thy form's decree,
Its various music in melodial play,
That it could tempt the generous Muse to say,
Behold your hope of immortality.

But vain the task if I could bend the bow;
The Sonnet is despised though it could know
The loveliest numbers of elysian spheres—
The form that Dante, Petrarch, Angelo
Blest with divinest song; where Keats careers,
And Wordsworth's myriad strains sublimely flow.

MY DESPAIR

THOU precious Sonnet, casket ever dear,
Compacted jewels aggregate in thee
Of such immeasurable, high degree,
That none of thine own race can be thy peer.
Thou hast upborne the strains of many a near
And many a distant Muse's devotee,
Who have on song's illimitable sea
Voyaged to harbors of eternal cheer.

I can but own thou hast been good to me,
For time and oft, beneath thy just decree,
My prayers were answered at thy sacred shrine;
But still I lift the agonizing cry,
To build but one great Sonnet, one divine,
One soaring, faultless thing that cannot die.

UPWARD he climbs to reach the soaring height
In whose ethereal, heart-enrapturing air
The masters wrought great sonnet gems, and there
To build a deathless one of life and light;
But while of it Hope dimly catches sight,
His eyes see only fruitlessness, and stare
At that far distant region in despair,
And down he falls in deep Parnassian night.

Dear Sonnet-Muse, do not unpitying feel
That all his soul is not as firmly leal
As when the blood ran youthful in his veins;
Ah, this can never be, but let him lie
Where he in ecstasy may hear thy strains
And see the speechless wonders of thy sky.

THE MUSE FINDING THE HEAD OF ORPHEUS: A STATUE BY EDWARD BERGE

O ORPHEUS dear, Apollo's radiant one,
Is all I find of thee this beauteous head?
Were Jove's dread thunderbolts asleep or dead
When this mad murder was in baseness done?
Alas! his lyre its loved career has run:
No more the lion to its tones will tread,
No more by it the forest's brood be led,
Nor quivering rocks leap rapturous to the sun.

Yet Music still will hold thee as her own
Whose ghostly strains immortal will be blown
From mountain peak to mountain peak of song;
While poets clasp thee to their starry breast,
And on their wings ethereal borne along
Mount with new glory on their ceaseless quest.

WATTS-DUNTON AND THE SONNET

WATTS-DUNTON, rich in literary lore,
And of Apollo's royal brotherhood,
Says that the octave of the Sonnet should
Run like the eager wave that seeks the shore;
And that, the fury of the billow o'er,
Its slow subsidence to the ocean would
Point then the sestette to its needed good—
The two uniting in a perfect score.

Yet, sonnet-winged, what deathless verses fly
Through Poesy's illimitable sky,
With movement various-winged as Music wills;
And here Minerva's golden voice would say,
If Form, and nought else, all your vision fills,
Your soulless work will perish in a day.

POETRY

WHO dares to say that Poetry is not,
Or having been has now lain down to die,
Know nought of that deep, wonder-working eye
Which domes and palaces the meanest spot;
That sees yon gorgeous cloud a royal cot
Whereon the wearied Day is fain to lie;
Or can the fairies at their sport espy
Within the rose by radiant arrows shot.

Nor do they hear the soul's tremendous lyre
When Poetry, aflame with wild desire,
Strikes from its lavish strings immortal strains—
Strains ever born within the spirit's cell,
To lift all baseness from its paltry gains,
And set it for a time where angels dwell.

WITH NATURE

THE LEAST AS THE GREATEST

WHEN on a rosy-bosomed cloud I sail
In luring Fancy's music-haunted air,
In hope some beauty-breathing creature there
Will bless mine ear with an unwonted tale;
Or when Imagination would prevail
Upon my prisoned, torturing thoughts to dare
Some peak-encircled, eagle-loving lair,
Lament unbosoms her despairing wail.

Then on the wings of an immortal song
I find me borne in ecstasy along
To where rejoice the children of the soul;—
For still the Muse has myriad-stringed her harp,
And as Life craves the music of the whole,
Why should we ever at the smallest carp?

SUNSHINE

THE clouds in thickening squadrons thronged the sky
Wherefrom the streaming rain insistent fell,
And dark the village lay as though some spell
Had breathed upon the day's all-gladdening eye.
The wind as willing aid went storming by,
Howling triumphant in the lonely dell,
While roared the swollen waters that could tell
A tale would make destruction's self to sigh.

But lo, the storm has closed its wings, for plays
Upon the church's spire the fulgent rays
That broadening flush with splendor all the scene,
And times there are, so steeped in fearsome gloom,
We feel our days would nevermore be green,
When sudden sunshine fills our souls with bloom.

A CALIFORNIA GARDEN

THE chaliced tulips, bravely scarleted,
And brimming with the sun's gold-hearted wine,
To us are nodding with memorial sign
From out the splendors of their pansied bed.
The virgin Spring has such refulgence shed
Upon their cheeks with her caress divine,
That Beauty there might evermore recline,
Nor dream that any of her kin were dead.

Near by the elm-trees snow their vernal bloom,
The droning bees among the blossoms boom,
And distantly a joyful songster trills;
While in our hearts contentment's tranquil airs,
From out the bosom of celestial hills,
Soothe to repose all peace-tormenting cares.

TO THE TREE

BENEATH thy verdurous arch I love to lie,
And on thy life serenely ruminate,
On things that hang upon the doom of fate,
On all the panoramas passing by.
The happy birds to thee in numbers fly,
To tell their love with joys that never bate,
The patient kine, the dreamer, idler, sate
Their ease beneath thy branches as do I.

What strength and beauty in thy curving limb,
How fair thy leaves as in the air they swim,
Or when the breeze their lovely being stirs.
Earth's giant child! she loves thee as her best:
In life thy body and thy soul are hers,
In death thou fall'st to fructify her breast.

THE MOUNTAIN PEAK

THOU mountain's topmost peak, that towers too high
For man to lay his friendly cheek on thine,
Companioned by the silences divine
Thou canst behold the worlds with quiet eye.
No tree here smiles in gladness on the sky,
Of lovely bloom and grass there is no sign,
And ice and snow a wreath round thee entwine,
That man and all his skill dare not defy.

Thou'rt like some spirit purged of earthly dross,
Who waiting calmly for the torturing cross,
In isolated grandeur stands alone;
Whose eye sees through our life's material pall,
And ranging round the spiritual zone
Views God in gloried splendor over all.

THE VALLEY

HOW sweet this vale where bending willows lean
Above the glistening stream that hastes away,
Mingling its music through the livelong day
With that of all the creatures of the green.
What avenues invite where we may glean
Some wondrous thing forgotten by the fay,
Or bid the eye some noble tree survey,
Or hunt for blooms the loveliest ever seen.

Beneath this giant oak's wide-spreading arms
Let us now lie, and, free from all alarms,
Adventure boldly to the Land of Dream,
Where gorgeous castles float in roseate air,
Where maidens find their prince, where dazzling teem
All things beyond the power of despair.

TWIN PEAKS, SAN FRANCISCO

I SEE you rise beyond the surging street,
O Peaks belovèd, so divinely fair,
That Nature's boldest courage would despair
To mould and garnish others more complete,
Whether the gray-hued mists of ocean bear
Their streamers o'er you, or the sun's kiss greet
Your lovely bloom and blade, or moonbeams meet
To weave new beauties in your freshening air.

Full oft mine eyes behold you as the breasts
Of some huge Goddess whose benign behests
Upon the City of her love are laid;
And from her sounding lips then fancy hears
Prophetic words my dreaming sees arrayed
In deeds that shake immortally the years.

THE FLOWER

THIS tiny seed that bears no future's sign,
Which has no word of loveliness to say,
Within the waiting earth I gently lay,
And lo! a dazzling miracle is mine:
A beauteous creature, carved by hand divine,
Springs like a spirit to the light of day,
So wonderful in all its great array
We dare not deem it less than God's design.

All color's essence of the lands and skies
Upon its fragrant, fragile petal lies,
That wantons in the breeze with newer grace.
Look in its inmost heart and thrill to see
All beauties of the universal space,
All mystery that has been or that shall be.

WONDER

THE redbird's whistle and the catbird's mew,
How oft I've heard them when my years were young—
Heard them until their beads of song were strung
On threads whose music all their knowledge knew.
We could but pause that melody might strew
The woodland with its heart's ecstatic tongue,
And then on spirit wings they gladly sprung
To where Creation throned herself anew.

O wondrous one, we marvel as of yore
That you should live alone with mystery's lore,
For none can pierce the miracle of things.
The great-souled eagle of imperial eye,
Can he outbeat the mallard's awesome wings,
Or regal condor of Andean sky?

CLEARING UP AFTER A SHOWER

DURING these golden moments has the rain
Withdrawn its drops at mandate of the sun,
Whose silver lances at the cloud's edge run
And glint along the woodland's lovely train.
All nature thrills as with new-hearted strain,
The crystal stream a deeper note has won,
While every leaf rejoices till there's none
Whose voice from benediction can refrain.

Thou ceaseless miracle of earth and sky,
What doubts consume us when we fain would try
To voyage round the smallest of thine isles;
And when we helpless drift off Beauty's shore
Amid the ripples of her radiant smiles,
We can but touch her garment and adore.

A SUMMER AFTERNOON

NO better day than this could fortune own,
This afternoon of undivided rest,
Where nothing heavier sits upon the breast
Than thistle-down by fairy fingers thrown.
Above, the barn bears silence deeply lone;
Below, the wain with gathered hay oppressed
Wheels to its home; the pigeons seek their nest,
While every air is quiet as a stone.

How full of tranquil bliss this rural scene,
Where discord cannot breathe, and where we glean
Some foretaste of the joys of hallowed peace;
Here Beauty spreads her uncorrupted wings,
And here a blessedness that cannot cease
Through all the heart with inspiration sings.

YEA, Life is ours with all its gains,
With all its losses too,
And skies are swept by storms and rains,
Then blossom into blue;
Nor can Death stranger be than Life,
If we but clearly see,
That though they seem to be at strife,
They in the end agree;
For in Creation's breast they meet,
To make eternal things complete.

THE CALIFORNIA POPPY

WHEN winter's rains have drenched the arid earth,
And thrown a mantle green upon the dearth,
And welcome sunshine greets the coming year,
While Beauty spreads her glories far and near,
Then the great Sun, with pride of power blown,
Not yet content with wonders of his hand,
A glorious image of himself he planned—
The Golden Poppy—California's own.
Its wondrous cup he filled with his bright beams
And warmed them with the love of poet's dreams;
And so it sleeps until its satin cheeks
Its parent's kiss in ecstasy bespeaks.
Thou glorious one, of nature thou dost share
A feathery bed of foliage, whence thy fair
And stately stalk arises in the air,
Bearing thy cup, a marvel to behold,
From out whose depths a stream of priceless gold
Pours through all nature's veins with wealth untold.

WITH SOME OF THE GREAT

TO JULIUS CÆSAR

THOU mighty-souled, thou myriad-minded one,
The greatest of the few supremely great,
To thee in star-crowned, solitary state
The streams of thought still swelling ever run.
Thy slayers knew not what their hands had done,
For through thy bosom's murder-rended gate
Poured the rich blood prepotent to create
An age-long rule beneath the Empire's sun.

Though War's fell demons drenched thee with their wine,
Law's wound-effacing ministers were thine,
And Peace around thee sowed her quickening seed;
Dissension shrank beneath thy mastering hand,
While Rome, long tortured, ceasing then to bleed,
Uprose to heights immeasurably grand.

BYRON

BYRON still grandly lives; his crater's fire
Was born to gush with heart-consuming pain;
The world still owns the splendor of his reign,
And wreathes with immortelle that throbbing lyre,
Where passion cries with unappeased desire,
Where loftiest thought evokes its loftiest strain
Amid the mockeries of fierce disdain
And scorn of cant red hot with scourging ire.

As restless and as ample as the sea,
And as its winds unconquerably free,
He was defiantly the challenger of things.
Revolt surged rampant in his every vein,
And at the last, borne on by mighty wings,
He spilled his life-blood on his brother's chain.

TO EDWIN MARKHAM

O MASTER of imperial song, we greet
You here triumphant as we have before,
And lay, enriched by your abounding store,
Our love in heaping garlands at your feet.
We hail you now as one who takes his seat
Among the immortals of poetic lore,
Who can in high, enchanted regions soar,
Yet hold his friendly comradeship complete.

We praise you not for one undying song
That rolled its thunderous protest far along
Until a newer hope bestarred the sky;
But more because from your consummate art
Others have sprung that in our memories lie
As jewels garnered from your deepest heart.

EDWARD ROWLAND SILL

THE heart of Nature throbbed against his own:
Deep-nested in the grass he loved to lie
And watch the wonders of the earth and sky,
Till in his being's self their souls were grown;
He floated with the cloud above him blown,
The winds were his, the streamlet murmuring by,
The tree his brother was, while soaring high
On Hope's vast wings he ranged Faith's farthest zone.

Beauty was his beyond man's niggard worth;
Her fairies blest him from his very birth,
And at his wand the Venus breathed anew.
Though early doomed, he made no wail nor whine,
But on he strode a spirit brave and true,
Still living greatly on the things divine.

ON CALIFORNIA'S LEGISLATIVE DECLARATION MAKING INA COOLBRITH POET LAUREATE

THE State of California, in its hand
The Golden Poppy, is before her now,
And on her stainless and resplendent brow
Inscribes its Muse's titular command.
And all the children of our golden land
In jubilation with approval bow,
As her with chorused praises they allow
Immortal union with Apollo's band.

So, Ina Coolbrith, thus you ever are
Our all unfading, brightly glowing star,
That adds new glory to poetic skies;
A pioneer with California's own,
Who labored hard and with supernal cries
Upraised and placed her on empurpled throne.

JOHN MUIR

HE knew all things he trod beneath his feet,
His sympathizing brother was the tree,
And any blade his piercing eye could see
Was his with passionate wonderment to greet.
Nature was his with open breast to meet,
And at her sacred shrine to bend the knee,
There to uplift his praise in such degree
It seemed that Prayer had made his soul her seat.

The glacier warmed to him and told its tale,
To him the mountain held a newer grail,
While streams made music never heard before.
To his deep sense the Lord in glory shone,
And gave his being such celestial store
Priestly he seemed, supernal and alone.

ON READING
THE LIFE OF FRANCIS THOMPSON
BY EVERARD MEYNELL

WHAT gold and dust were mingled in the veins
Of this great singer; through what awful mire
He dragged his Orphic, consecrated lyre;
What freedom's glory his; what hell's own chains.
And yet his Muse with heavenly lustre reigns:
All fathomless the depths of his desire,
And bosomed with the holiest vestal fire
Pours the deep stream of his immortal strains.

A child he seems to whom is given to bear
Jewels that blaze magnificently rare
O'er distant peaks that mock men's straining gaze;
We watch him as he flies from height to height,
Dreading and doubting, till with vast amaze
We see him star-crowned in a blaze of light.

ON READING GEORGE STERLING'S BOOK OF SONNETS PUBLISHED BY THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA

THE unfamiliar grips us as we stray
Through Sterling's Sonnet world: flame-hearted things
Conquer the boundlessness of space on wings
That dreams have fashioned in their wildest play.
From far horizons unexplored are they,
All richly robed in deep imaginings,
And tuned to music that triumphant sings
As they sweep on their cyclopean way.

What dim-discovered lands through mists arise,
What marvellous forms, what magic-woven skies,
What kings and demons breathe in haunted air,
What thoughts lie captive in his master line,
While Beauty revels in her glory there
Fresh as from virgin mould and as divine.

TO LLOYD MIFFLIN

MIFFLIN, by all the Muses sonnet-crowned,
Could I but raise my struggling verse to where
Thou roamest free, the starry heights to dare,
It would world-listening praises of thee sound;
For Art in thee a devotee has found
Who has through all his years but sought to bear
Her blazoned banner in the radiant air,
While dewing with his blood her sacred ground.

What noble struggle thine from day to day,
To give great being to the lifeless clay,
And bid thy canvas glory-colored thrill;
While Poesy has held thee so at call,
Thy vibrant numbers Thought's vast chambers fill,
And on the ear in golden music fall.

AT POLLOCK'S GRAVE

No bosom-nourished blossoms ever blow,
The wild grass withers on the desolate ground,
No meanest marking headstone can be found,
Where he who soared so high now lies so low.
For him "the air is chill"; no longer flow
His tears for lost Olivia; no more is bound
The Falcon to the rocks all doom-encrowned;
His Chandos Picture's spectres, who can know?

Apollo's child, thy fate is but the one
Of him who makes a brother of the sun,
And in the "Realms of Gold" bears dazzling light;
Thou art a member of that radiant host
That holds its torch before men's blinded sight,
And dies all unregarded at his post.

BENJAMIN IDE WHEELER

UPON the heights a victor Wheeler stands,
Spread out before him Learning's rolling spheres,
And where, companioned by the fruitful years,
He rose responsive to all great demands.
He never built upon the shifting sands,
Nor paused at pessimism's idle tears,
But armed with truth he had no coward fears,
And reared his temples with a master's hands.

Oh, golden day of days whereon was found
Our Education's Chief, whom we have crowned
As one who mounted to the topmost goal.
The University is blazoned high,
And on its loftiest panel man will scroll
Forevermore his name that cannot die.

TO HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

BELOVED mentor of historic lore,
From loftiest peak my muse would fain resound
Thy volumed praises as she sees thee crowned
With laurel that shall live forevermore;
And with the leaves of those loved trees that soar
Where Beauty and the Owl drink peace profound,
And which still hymn thy Patrick all renowned
Among the treasures of Bohemia's store.

But while around our souls those joys entwine,
For love of thee our hearts have raised a shrine
Where flames in crystal air a vestal light;
And as thou hast escaped the grasp of death,
We fondly hold thee to our greedy sight,
And shout our welcome with our dearest breath.

HENRY MORSE STEPHENS

In soul and body great, a marvellous one,
Who delved unceasingly in history's lore,
With mind that could in freedom grandly soar
Where blazed in triumph Learning's mighty sun.
And humor's rivers with delight did run
From sparkling fountains of his being's core;
While bounteous he, and yet his liberal store
Lagged far behind what he could wish were done.

Death came to him so suddenly it thrilled
Our hearts with wonder to behold thus stilled
The undiminished splendor of his years;
But as we march along scholastic ways
We see his star through memory's mist of tears
Outglow in glory all our loftiest praise.

FORREST

HOW few the actors who have climbed the skies
Until, by universal vision seen,
Upon their brow we hail immortal green,
And as to Forrest give the glittering prize.
With what majestic mien does he arise,
To whose grand voice all accents could convene,
From rolling thunder to the mild serene,
While passion played upon our vanquished eyes.

We ride upon the vision of his Lear
As though upon some stream of sorrow's fear
That rouses portents never known before.
So in our memory deeper still he makes
Macbeth's deep hell, and higher yet we soar
With gentle Hamlet mid the tangled brakes.

WILLIAM HENRY BEATTY

CHIEF JUSTICE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF CALIFORNIA
FOR TWENTY-SIX YEARS

HE was a royal man from top to toe,
With head bespeaking thought, bright, beaming eye,
A mien majestical, and spirit high
That bore him loftily above the low.
Still life to him meant work, not empty show;
On the old ways he firmly dared rely,
Yet could injustice to its teeth defy,
And sought forevermore the right to know.

The Law to him was as a sacred shrine,
A bannered splendor and a certain sign
For man beyond all question to obey.
As true he was as vestal to her vow,
And as the requiem floats above his clay
Undying honor sits upon his brow.

JEREMIAH LYNCH

LYNCH breathed a throbbing life at every pore,
And drained its essence to the very deep,
Until he seemed its freshnesses to keep
As some perpetual spring of boundless store.
In Egypt and her vast, mysterious lore
He delved with all her wonderments to reap;
And through the Klondyke and her icy sleep
He plowed a way that men still marvel o'er.

So when corruption raised its sceptred sway
Against his city as its certain prey,
He smote it with his spiritual might;
And with all courage girt, hard bearing down,
Like some crusader with his arms of light,
He won the victor's honor-gloried crown.

JESSE WARREN LILIENTHAL

SOME men there are who seem to walk the ground
With understanding of tremendous might,
That can the crooked straighten into right,
And all disturbers to their teeth confound,
And yet with hearts that in their depths abound
With love for all the things that meet the sight,
And who with souls that on the topmost height
Find beauty, grace, and every heavenly sound.

Such wast thou, Jesse Lilienthal, whose brow
With thy exalted worth is blazing now,
Until it bids us to commercial pause.
A member of Isaiah's remnant thou,
Who drew great breaths of his inspired cause,
And ever kept his fellow-serving vow.

MARY WEAVER KINCAID

LIKE some imperial oak she grandly stood,
That weds itself in power to the ground,
And gazing in serenity around
Looms the great splendor of the neighborhood;
Unconscious of the all pervasive good
Its mighty arms in peaceful joy surround,
It lives its life with benefactions crowned,
And by the loveliest dryads retinued.

The breeze may gently toss its leaflets fair,
The stormy winds may wrench them to despair,
Yet the tree stands and makes with life its peace;
So her, the fiercest storms could not dismay,
Nor could seductive calms her hold release,
But on she pressed to her successful day.

TO ROBERT W. SERVICE

THOU art, O Service, such a human soul
As man has seldom seen in storm or wild,
A block of nature pure and undefiled,
Where mountains soar and matchless rivers roll.
Thou seest man where lack of law's control
Gives him to life a mad unreconciled,
In every thought bedeviled and beguiled,
And gathering nothing save the devil's dole.

The endless reach of silence-hearted snows
Wherethrough the magisterial Yukon flows,
Where blizzards bite their victims to the bone;
And where the woman with her luring wile
Outbreathes such fumes as hell would joy to own,
Till man is lost in oceans of the vile.

WILSON

WHAT soul can top our Wilson of the ones
That held for us the power-compelling reins,
And seemed impressed with heavenly-minted seals?
We hate comparisons, but where shall we,
Except among our best, his equal find?
For does he not in bluest ether stand,
A blazoned spirit bravely holding high
The standard of humanity and right?
Is not the pearl of speech his gift divine
Whereon his language feeds that trances men?
To see how large he is, behold how small
The Senators who snap and snarl at him,
And vainly think they are made great when they,
Inflated, carp at him with bellowing rage;
And fail to heed that mere resounding words
That fill the thoughtful listener with disgust
Are but the playthings of the idle winds.
This Treaty, born of Wilson's mighty heart,
Must now be taken at its precious worth—
A thing sublimest, for it yields the hope
Of throttling once for all the beast of war—
A beast who has upon this pleasant earth
Wrought havoc and destruction's awful waste,
With blood of man that swims in boundless depths.
The words of all the languages must fail
To strike its horrors in completion's vast.
And now this man—our monumental hope—

Lies with his eyes upon this Treaty fixed,
While illness grips him hard upon the throat.
Dear God, we pray Thee, he may struggle through,
And grant at this inimitable hour
No thing may fail him that with him should be.
Let Optimism's brightest banners wave
Till all her army of supernal light
Sweep in proud glory round his honored bed,
And from that bed may he serenely rise
Clothed in the radiance of abundant health,
And with the Victory of the Treaty crowned.

LAFAYETTE

WHAT day is this whose glorious name
Stands calling at Columbia's ear,
What star is this whose quenchless flame
Resplendent shines from year to year?
The natal day, the full-blown star,
Of him we knew in peace and war,
Of him we never can forget—
The blameless hero, Lafayette.

As long as History's iron pen
Shall to her task in honor turn,
Or patriot fires in hearts of men
All purely, unconsuming burn,
We should rejoicing's sacred praise
Above commercial tumult raise,
And vow we never shall forget
The freedom-passioned Lafayette.

Oh, how can we pass by this day,
And not live o'er the precious time,
When he with hope cast fear away,
And he, a Hercules sublime,
Rose high, scarce more than stripling youth,
On wings of liberty and truth,
And was what we shall ne'er forget—
The courage-dowered Lafayette.

With what serenity he strode
Along the ways of Washington,
And bore unflinchingly his load
Beneath the brilliance of that sun,
Till, laurel-wreathed, all stately he
Stood in Fame's Temple, while the free
Resolved they never would forget
The glory-blazoned Lafayette.

And there today he stands the pride
America would not forego,
While all her children by his side
Their praiseful trumpets joy to blow.
Our souls are fed when thus we sound
The name of him the world around,
And thrill that we can ne'er forget
Our heart's immortal, Lafayette.

IN VARIOUS KEYS

BOHEMIA

WHY do we love our dear Bohemia so?
Because the soul of fellowship is there;
Because before her doors we drop all care,
And bid the fires of sentiment to glow.
Life there on widest wings of joy would go,
And every vein of wit and humor dare,
While to her blossomy heights she thrills to bear
The priceless jewels men are proud to know.

Within her sacred ground Tradition hives
In honeyed store a line of laureled lives,
That makes a fadeless splendor of her day;
And hallowed Memory visits oft her halls,
To linger long and tenderly essay
The themes that once had glorified her walls.

A CHANT OF VICTORY

JULY 14, 1919

IN this triumphant day of days
We lift her to the skies,
That there consummately may blaze
The ardor of her eyes,
That there, O France, thy lily's bloom
On every Frenchman's breast
May with resplendence newly loom
And be with glory blest.

How rent and torn these four long years
The homes your precious own,
What dreadful glooms, what sickening fears
You knew as yours alone:
But now the deep-souled Chanteclair
Sounds loud his glorious throat,
And Victory from the thrilling air
Responds with golden note.

Do ye not hear it, Frenchmen all,
Until your heartstrings quiver,
And at the feet of France you fall
Forever and forever?
Know now that all your glooms are gone,
Know that the sun is here,
And that on Victory's mighty throne
Sits France without a fear.

ON THE WINGS OF WAR

AUGUST, 1918

WE ride upon the wings of war,
And would no other ride;
We hail its blood-encrimsoned star
Our one and only guide.
Let Treasons come
And Peace's sum,
War's ruin waits them deep and wide.

On these in scorn of doubt's despite,
Or tempting compromise,
Or propaganda swift to smite,
Unhindered still we rise,
In hope that we
Shall greatly see
The starry wonder of the skies—

The wonder that both day and night,
On heaven's empurpled scroll,
We read in flaming splendor, Fight
Until you reach the goal,
Fight till the blood
Runs down in flood,
Fight to the grandeur of your soul.

God of our Fathers, keep us true,
Upon this fateful ride;
Let us in Freedom's boundless blue
Breathe nought but Freedom's pride,
Until at last,
All dangers passed,
With honor's peace we can abide.

THE FLAG

Blest emblem of the mighty free,
Undaunted, stainless shalt thou be
As long as Liberty shall own
Our homage and our souls alone.

Oh, be it thus forevermore,
Make it our still increasing store,
Till in the utmost night of time
Men treasure nothing more sublime.

THE YOUNG AVIATOR

INSATIATE youth would make his dazzling prize
The eagle's element, and proudly learn
From farthest reaches of the air to earn
Enough to make man dangerously wise.
Then Science, with Hephæstus to advise,
The monster built, whereby with mad concern
The eager youth the solid earth dared spurn
And all the wingèd creatures of the skies.

As distance flees before him, and he seems
Within the consummation of his dreams,
The winds incensed smite him with ruin dire;
But he has felt transfiguring, mighty things,
And from the ashes of his vast desire
Shall grandly rise unconquerable wings.

ANGELS

Is heaven the home of angels, did you say,
And there alone their virtues can be found,
Where spirits in ascending rank abound,
And on the soul transfiguring essence lay?
Indeed, they swarm on every earthly way,
Bearing their harps of most melodial sound,
And with unwithering leaves in glory crowned
The saving graces of mankind obey.

The gentle bathe with sweetness many a sore;
They fearless wade through war's abhorrent gore,
And soothe the bosom's anguish into sleep;
The gifted ones their songs and dreams unchain,
Until in mighty choruses they sweep
From end to end of nature's wide domain.

SAN FRANCISCO 1912

To her the Past is now a dream
Where every glory holds its way,
And where the Present dares to deem
The Future's hand on her shall lay
Such treasure of achievement's gold,
That in his arms her saint shall fold
His favored daughter on his breast,
And say to all mankind, Behold
This wonder of the wondrous West,
This one my Serra raised for me,
This mighty one whose radiant crest
In matchless splendor pales the rest,
This one that by Balboa's sea
Sits robed and crowned immortally.

LOOKING DOWN ON SAN FRANCISCO AT NIGHT

THE noisy day is done, and now I see
My City lying in the arms of Night,
So lovely, so magnificently dight,
I bend once more to her my loyal knee.
The starred emblazonment above me she
Twins with yon seas of scintillating light;
Yet still amid this miracle of sight
The Spirit's voices raise their poignant plea:

O thou that Serra in his vision saw,
Hast thou obeyed thy soul's flame-written law,
Or hast thou sought for gems in Mammon's mire?
Wilt thou not glorify thy saintly name,
And nobly forge in Consecration's fire
Great deeds unsullied by the touch of shame?

THE COLUMNS OF THE SUN AT BAALBEC

IN time long vanished thousands gathered here,
To greet rejoicingly the God of Day,
That on his mystical, majestic way
Dispersed the terrors of their nightly fear.
The Sun still grandly keeps on his career,
To destinations thought cannot betray,
While those who did his sovran rule obey
Have blent with desert dust this many a year.

Of all the Temple's columns but remain
A few that still caress the orphaned plain,
Which spreads afar its melancholy waste.
Here desolation mocks the cities' pride,
For they shall Life's hot fevers madly taste,
And soon or late be borne on Death's great tide.

THE ORGAN

AMONG the organ pipes he stood to bare
The secrets of their heart and how arrayed,
While on its structure tenderly he laid
His practiced hand in more than loving care.
Then moved by far-off voices he sat where
In ecstasy he so divinely played,
That earth and all its evils seemed to fade
As hallowed rapture filled the tremulous air.

O striking wonder that from out this thing
Of massive wood and iron at touch should spring
The sounds that stir us to the bosom's core—
The sounds that lie in Nature's varied breast,
From angry ocean's fear-compelling roar
To that of leaflet by the breeze caressed.

CHURCH-BELLS

How sweet and clear the Sunday church-bells sound
In memory's halls as in the olden days,
And then I see my mother robed for praise,
With her dear heart to adoration bound.
The village seemed with consecration crowned,
All worldliness forgot, and all dismays,
As the processions went their several ways,
To hear the reverend man the Word expound.

Remembrance comes from out that far, far time,
Until its voices in mellifluous chime
Sound as the prelude to eternal airs;
And as the heavens unroll I seem to see
Not Science bold that every province dares,
But humble Faith that sets the spirit free.

A STREET IN OLD MONTEREY

WHAT brooding solemness all things here wear:
Silence has fallen to its utmost deep,
And Night's first stars their twinkling vigil keep
O'er these old houses Time still loves to spare.
Within these walls what señoritas fair
Were fain the ecstasy of love to reap,
As the fandango with its whirling sweep
Sped onward to the flying hours' despair.

Forever gone those times of gay romance,
Of mission grandeur, the bewildering dance,
And all the dramas of the olden day;
Nought now remains but memories strongly stirred
By pictures such as this that come to stay
In one immortal, ever-glorious word.

A CAGED EAGLE

THE eagle beats against his bars in vain,
As he beholds the vast outspreading sky
Mocking his passionate, bemoaning cry
For bounding joys now turned to hopeless pain.
No more like thunder can he fall amain
Upon the quarry in his triumph high,
Nor all the legions of the air defy
In search of food his children to maintain.

What thoughts are his as day by lengthening day
He feels his pinions rusting fast away,
That made him sharer of the lightning's glee;
And as from summit of his ice-crowned rocks
All universal space was his to see,
How could he dream of slavery's chains and locks!

AN OLD MINER AT SHASTA WITH THE HAUNTS OF OLD

MY boyhood voices call me and I go
Where roamed I freely when my feet were young,
When mountain, wood, and stream their glories sung
To every moment that my heart could know.
Here toiled for gold, in fiercest joy and woe,
Great swarms of men from all creation sprung;
Now they are gone, from life's great issues flung
Like breakers when the winds in fury blow.

In those rare days the blood ran hot and high,
Yet now in peace the towering mountains lie,
While all the village drones the hours away.
Here precious Memory strikes her deepest note,
As once again the Past floods all the day,
And on its bosom I contented float.

EGYPT

THOU world-entrancing Egypt, matchless one,
Before whose majesty the nations kneel,
To drink from thy exhaustless cup and feel
Through every vein its magic ichor run.
Lone as Sesostris in thy burning sun,
Thou hast on Time so well impressed thy seal,
That all the ages, as they round thee wheel,
Proclaim forevermore "Like thee there's none!"

Change has thy bosom trenched in ruthless ways,
Yet still thy Sphinx in royal calm surveys
The desert sands illimitably far;
And thine own Nile, by every year caressed,
Obeying thy propitious, fulgent star,
Still bears the food of millions on its breast.

TO THE MUMMY OF PRINCESS ISIS

PRESENTED BY JEREMIAH LYNCH TO THE BOHEMIAN CLUB, SAN FRANCISCO, MAY 5, 1914

THOU art not dead, thou maid of mummied guise,
For thou arousest all the centuries gone,
And in our dreams, by memory's potence drawn,
Egypt before us in her splendor lies.
This princess has beheld with pride-lit eyes
The Gods' procession, gazed enraptured on
Thebes' mighty fane, heard Memnon greet the dawn,
And saw the Sphinx in wonder's realm arise.

Unrivalled land, within whose brimming bowl
The nations of the earth have steeped their soul,
Thy child we welcome to her alien shore;
To us she seems an ever-living sprite
From out the mystic, shadow-land of yore,
To shake new glories from her wings of light.

THE OLD SWEETHEART

(After the French of Ronsard)

WHEN at the candle-light, an agèd crone,
You wind and spin anear the evening blaze,
You'll murmur, as you marvelling sing my lays,
Ronsard famed me when I was Beauty's own.
And then your maid, raised to such novel zone,
Whom labor's somnolence inveterate sways,
Will rouse herself as Ronsard's song of praise
Blesses your name with an immortal tone.

A boneless phantom then in earth I'll lie,
Taking my last repose where myrtles sigh,
While at the hearth you'll crouch with head of gray—
My love lamenting and your proud disdain.
Live now, and know tomorrow's care is vain:
Oh, gather life's rich roses while you may.

Of this "famous sonnet," an English version of which is here attempted, John Bailey, in his work on "The Claims of French Poetry," says: "There are few finer sonnets in any language."

THE OLD DOCTOR

His office in confusion ever lay—
Books, herbs, and vials scattered all around,
But things were cornered where they could be found,
As oft he chose the healing drug to weigh.
With shoulders bowed, and hair of snowy gray,
With patient feet that shuffled o'er the ground,
And hands wherein all tenderness was bound,
He glorified his duties day by day.

From his great soul Learning had not been banned,
But his the power of the master hand
That made him king in presence of distress;
And what can take the place of his keen eye,
His consecrated toil, his zeal to bless,
The confidence in him when he was nigh?

CARCASSONNE

(After Gustave Nadaud)

MY years are many—sixty they;
My whole life long I've labored hard,
Yet with it all nought would allay
My great desire still ever barred.
Ah, here below right well I see
No perfect joy has any one:
What I most wish is not for me—
I have not yet seen Carcassonne!

Behind yon mountains dimly blue
They see the glorious City lie;
But ah, to reach it one must do
Five long, long leagues, then homeward hie,
Till all the toilsome way be stepped.
Were but a bounteous vintage done,
Or had the grapes unyellowed kept!—
I never shall see Carcassonne!

They say that during all the days,
The same as on a Sunday, there
The ones who pass along the ways
New clothes, and fine, white dresses wear.
They say too that the chateaux' walls
Are grand as those of Babylon,
A Bishop and two Generals!—
And still I know not Carcassonne!

Much sense is in the vicar's head:
We're so imprudent, that I ken.
In his oration well he said
Ambition 'tis that ruins men;
And yet, if only two days I
Could find when Autumn tasks were done,
My God! contented would I die
Once having gazed on Carcassonne!

Dear God, thy pardon I bespeak
If my prayer gives offense to Thee;
For things beyond us still we seek
In old age as in infancy.
My good wife, with my son Aignan,
Has journeyed far as to Narbonne;
My godson has viewed Perpignan,
Yet I have not seen Carcassonne!

So, once there sang anear Limoux
A peasant by his years bent low,
To whom I said: "Friend, rise, and you
With me shall on this journey go."
We left the next succeeding day;
But,—God forgive him!—ere he'd gone
Scarce half the distance dead he lay:
He never looked on Carcassonne!

THANKSGIVING, 1918

FAR up the mountain peaks of song
Where ecstasies of glory blow,
Where all the heartsome jewels throng
That deep-souled thankfulness can know,
My longing Muse with hallowed feet
Would step the ways that are complete.

Not since the blessèd Jesus came
To clothe and feed the starving world
Has such a heaven-directed flame
Upon the breast of earth been hurled,
Or Justice, crowned with stars of Right,
So lifted man to hills of light.

On this our own Thanksgiving Day
Our swelling hearts would now implore
The mind to drop its sordid clay,
And on the spirit's pinions soar
To realms of sempiternal fire
That burn around the soul's desire.

O God, we bless thee for this time
In words so poor it makes us weep;
But who can sing the word sublime
That lies beyond all soundings deep,
And with its fellows looms so high
It roams with them the farthest sky.

ON NEW YEAR'S EVE

THE Old Year's face is sadly pinched and wan,
His voice is very low, his heart is sere,
And well we know that ere another dawn
He'll be no longer here.

But ere he goes we'll take his withered hand
And thank him for the largess he bestowed,
For all the joys that went at his command
With us along Life's road;

For that companionship of perfect bloom,
The latest one whereof now flowers today,
When every melancholic imp of gloom
With cheers is chased away.

Another year is on our heads, yet we
Responsive sit around this bounteous board,
With joy-delighted hearts and eyes to see
Life's ever precious hoard.

We give no lamentations to the Year
Who soon from us will be forever gone,
For though Life brews for us full many a tear,
Still Hope leads bravely on.

Then let the storm sweep furious through the skies,
Undaunted we'll await the conquering Sun,
While from our hearts the old-time prayer shall rise,
God bless us every one!

LIFE'S JEWELS

Seek not life's jewels where the poppies grow,
Nor where Desire, all passion-poisoned, rears
Her luring domes, but in the heart of woe,
With shores far washed by sanctifying tears.

RICHES

All that life's ocean infinitely bears
Of joys beyond the greatest may be thine,
For everything is his who nobly dares,
And he that truly serves is then divine.

DE MORTUIS

DEATH

WHAT is it to be dead? But yesterday
Her sparkling eyes beamed on me with delight,
Her cheeks with color of the rose were bright,
And on her lips wild laughter ran at play;
But now in silence these have fled away:
Ice-cold her pallid face that holds no sight,
Her limbs are motionless, her breast locked tight,
Nor could she e'en to me one poor word say.

Life's vernal blooms scarce flowered at her call,
When Death's untimely winter killed them all,
And they with her irreparably lie.
Thou faded loveliness, can it be said
Thou wast but born to take a breath and die?
No, no, it cannot be that thou art dead.

THE GRAVE

WHAT eye has seen the bottom of the grave
Since first the plasma shook with dawning light
Till Evolution with its age-long might
To man new wonders in revealment gave?
Like that far one who in his darksome cave
Ate the raw flesh he won in bloody fight,
So all have had the same defeated sight,
Devil or saint, the skulker or the brave.

Yet Life her bounty pours on every scene:
This great tree, once a miracle of green,
Falls to the waiting earth and is no more;
But other lives from out its ashes spring,
And gathering to themselves new-hearted store
Pursue their courses on triumphant wing.

WHY FEAR?

WHY should I fear, O Death, to be laid low
When all life riots in my laughing veins;
Or tremble lest the armory of banes
Be now preparing for my final blow?
To me thou seemest never as a foe,
But as a kindly, loyal friend who deigns
To lead me with incalculable pains
Where every soul has gone and all must go.

What matters if we fall when life is sweet,
When happiness is flowering round our feet,
Or consummation settles on the head;
The Eternal Voice proclaims we are to be,
And that around us shall forever spread
The heartening wonders of divinity.

CONSOLATION

AH, one by one from Life's earth-spreading tree
They fell bedewed with all good men's regret,
And though my heart enshrines their memory, yet,
The poignant hurt of loss still lives with me.
What radiant souls were theirs for eyes to see;
What lions in their way they bravely met,
Till on their strife-worn brows were blazoning set
The everlasting stars of Victory.

O noble ones, my griefs I throw aside,
For death your labors has but sanctified
And passed you on for labors greater still;
For what is Life, or Death, in every mood,
But the expression of the mighty will
Which holds the sceptre of concentred Good.

LOVE

OF all the members of the angel choir
Love fills the uttermost exalted seat,
In every blessedness so all complete
She bears the blazon of celestial fire.
She fears no host of hell's consuming ire,
E'en when in awfulness of war they meet,
But gathering agonies around her feet,
She suages them with balms of her desire.

All things are hers beneath Life's various sky,
And did she flee Service would pine and die,
And man in unrestraint his brother tear.
The Universe itself is of her store,
For were her blessings left outside her care,
The blackened earth would know its God no more.

BEHOLD THE SEASONS

BEHOLD the Seasons: Spring with breast of bloom,
Summer whose harvests glorify the ground,
Autumn with every consummation crowned,
And Winter folding all within his tomb;
Where then at sleep within its fecund womb,
They feed on rest for their recurring round,
With each in turn its special guerdon found,
Year after year, and absolute as doom.

Who doubts the coming of the blessèd rain,
Or deems the gendering Sun will shine in vain,
Or cease to breed the clouds upon the sea?
Life in its vastness is an ordered whole,
Nor can the least of all its creatures be
Without the inspiration of a goal.

BEHOLD THE SKIES

THE dazzling splendor of the skies behold
When Day is fled and gently brooding Night
Leads out her train in golden glory dight,
As she has done for ages yet untold.
Unpausing and unhasting they have rolled,
By some transcendently colossal might,
Through boundless space so infinitely right
They keep their vasty orbits as of old.

Could Chance and Chaos, each forever blind,
Void of all form, of sense, desire, or mind,
Have caused these spheral harmonies to be?
Ah, no: The order evermore divine
Strikes every chord of all immensity,
Till even the smallest voice bears music's sign.

PROOF OF GOD

DOST ask for proof of God? Thou mayst as well
Ask of the daisy on its lowly throne
Whence, how, or why its loveliness has grown,
Or seek the secret of the Poet's spell.
Unwavering Faith is what their Voices tell,
For when their hearts lie close against thine own
Until their pulse-beats thrill thee to the bone,
Doubt's demons perish in their self-made hell.

In vain does Reason beat its haughty wings
Within the realm of inner-hearted things,
To fold at last in Logic's dull despair.
Yea, Mystery lies at Being's very core,
And nourished by divine, eternal care,
Walks veiled on Death's dim-lighted, lonely shore.

THE SPIRIT'S REALM

WHO dares to deem that on some new far day
The doors now locked will then be opened wide,
Wherethrough the Nymphs of Knowledge, big with pride,
Will pass triumphant on their certain way?
But were this to its roots achieved, could they
Explore the region where the Muses bide,
Or from the bosom of the spirit's tide
Its secrets in the hands of Science lay?

The grief which stirs the billows of the breast,
Like that sweet sympathy which gives them rest,
Defies the cunning of the weigher's scales:
The Spirit lives where grossness cannot come,
And there the Soul, tormented by its ails,
Hears saving voices when the rest are dumb.

RELIGION

RELIGION, warder of the earthly scene,
Sways her great sceptre o'er the heart of things,
And on the grievous wound her mantle flings,
When dark Despair unlades his heavy teen.
Her gentle ministrants, with power serene,
Bear the struck soul on softly muffled wings
To where real life with heavenly music sings,
And where spread worlds of everlasting green.

God reigns, no matter what the fool may say,
And when we learn with all our souls to pray,
We then to Him in closest bonds are bound.
Science can satisfy our body's needs,
But 'tis Religion, with her graces crowned,
That all the hungers of the Spirit feeds.

COMPLETENESS

DEATH never dies, nor Life, but as a pair,
Inseparably twinned, they ever hold
The Universe's myriads, young and old,
Within the ministrations of their care.
The death-reaped soul, that did the burdens bear
Of service dearer than the dearest gold,
Lies not in some dark, life-defying fold,
But mid the glories of celestial air.

Yea, even the smallest atom never dies
But Life triumphant to its deathbed flies,
As in the grief-drawn tear there sleeps a smile.
Change is Creation's wonder-breathing soul,
And ceaseless toils, well knowing all the while
Divine Completeness is the destined goal.

BELIEF

SCIENCE and Intellect all proudly soar
To every height that challenges the eye,
And in the shallows and the ocean pry
For wealth to swell their still increasing store.
The deepest secret would they not pass o'er,
Nor any problem howsoever high,
And e'en the Universe's heart they try,
Its very dearest chambers to explore.

But all experiment and logic fail
Against the mystic, spirit-woven veil
Which hangs before all Being's inner shrine:
The eye of Science sees man as a clod,
While all his voices hail him the divine,
Immortal subject of Almighty God.

LIFE AND DEATH

IT is decreed all things shall have an end,
E'en loveliest forms with beauty all endued,
Yet with what agony we oft have sued
Relentless Death his arrow not to send.
Ah, Life would thus its energies expend
Upon the hopes that blossom to delude,
For it would grow to baneful plenitude
If kindly Death did not its service lend.

These are two angels who with ministering care
Bestow their gifts in even-handed share
According to the just, eternal Will;
And in the spirit-haunted, boundless space
How can we doubt that every seeming ill
Shall in the end all blessedness embrace?

MONSTER OR GOD

IT may be that some demon, past all peers,
That no imagination could portray,
Has infinite power to torture or to slay,
Still keeping brimmed his reservoir of tears;
One who commands the reins of all the spheres,
And drives them through the hells of havoc's play,
As meaningless as would be this our day,
If on the earth were ended Life's careers.

'Tis monster then or God—a power divine
That bears Completeness as its sacred sign,
Or vast confusion of chaotic death;
And through the thinning mist of Doubt we hear
Faith's tenderly compelling voice that saith,
Come now with me and cast away all fear.

⁂ OF THIS BOOK TWO HUNDRED COPIES
WERE PRINTED IN THE MONTH OF APRIL
NINETEEN HUNDRED & TWENTY
BY TAYLOR & TAYLOR
SAN FRANCISCO

YB 11779
U. C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES
C042406523

M191924
985
T239
C
THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY